Martyn Burke

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Martyn Burke (born 1952) is a Canadian director, novelist and screenwriter from Toronto, Ontario.[1]

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Martyn Burke

Martyn Burke in 2013

Born	1952 Hamilton, Ontario, Canada
Occupation	Director, producer, screenwriter, novelist, documentary films

Biography [edit source]

Born in Hamilton, Ontario, to Freda and Les Burke who immigrated from England to Canada during World War II as part of the British Civilian Military Authority, Martyn Burke graduated from Royal York High School in Toronto, Ontario. He attended McMaster University, where he played on the football team, the McMaster Marauders, and graduated with a degree in Economics. After a brief stint working in television programming for a major advertiser, Burke paid his own way over to Viet Nam to work as a freelance journalist and photographer covering the war. His experience reporting on the Viet Nam War was the beginning of his writing and filmmaking career and served as the background for his first novel, *Laughing War* which was short-listed for a Books in Canada First Novel Award.

In 2018, the BBC listed the Paramount Pictures film Top Secret which Burke co-wrote as one of the top one hundred film comedies of all time.

In 2012 he won the Peabody Award and was short-listed for an Academy Award for the film Under Fire: Journalists In Combat; in 2015 he was named winner of the Auteur Award by the International Press Association in Los Angeles; and in 2018 he was awarded an Honorary Doctorate by McMaster University in Hamilton, Ontario.[2]

Burke lives in Santa Monica, California with his wife, Laura Morton.

Career [edit source]

After Viet Nam, Burke started writing, directing and producing documentaries for CBC Television winning a number of awards in Canada for his work. Among them are a Gemini Award for Best Documentary for *Connections*, a multi-part undercover report on the Mafia in Canada and America, and a Genie Award for his documentary, *Witnesses*, filmed inside the conflict zones of Afghanistan. Other conflict zone documentaries include *The Week That Paddy Died*, about the sectarian violence in Northern Ireland.

Often Burke's work as a documentary filmmaker inspired his novels or films. His documentary *The KGB Connections*, resulted in his later novel, *The Commissar's Report*, a satirical story about Soviet and United States relations during the Cold War. Producing and directing a segment for CBS's *West 57th* about early black R and B legends Ruth Brown and Bo Diddley being cheated out of record royalties, led to his novel *Ivory Joe*, the story of a 1950s family being caught up in the turmoil of the music industry at the dawn of Rock and Roll.

While still living in Canada, Burke began writing and directing theatrical films, such as John Candy's first film, *The Clown Murders*, and *Power Play* a.k.a. *Coup d'Etat* which starred Peter O'Toole and David Hemmings. He emigrated to California when Columbia Pictures optioned his book *The Commissar's Report* and brought him to Los Angeles to write the screenplay.

Continuing to produce and direct documentaries - his 2012 documentary *Under Fire: Journalists in Combat* was short-listed for an Academy Award and won a Peabody Award in 2012 - his theatrical and cable television film career expanded in Los Angeles and includes the Emmy Award nominated film for TNT, *Pirates of Silicon Valley* for which he was also nominated for a DGA Award as director. In 2015 he was awarded the International Press Academy's Auteur award. He wrote a number of HBO and TNT films including *The Second Civil War* starring Beau Bridges (for which Bridges won an Emmy) and James Earl Jones and Denis Leary, *Sugartime* starring John Turturro about Chicago mafia don Sam Giancana, and an adaptation of George Orwell's *Animal Farm*. His feature film credits include co-writing the Paramount Pictures cult classic comedy, *Top Secret!* and directing *Avenging Angelo* starring Sylvester Stallone, Anthony Quinn and Madeline Stowe.

Films [edit source]

- *Avenging Angelo* - Warner Bros. (director)
- *Pirates of Silicon Valley* - TNT (writer/director)
- *Animal Farm* - TNT (writer) -
- *Pentagon Wars* - HBO (writer)
- *The Second Civil War* - HBO (writer)
- *Sugartime* - HBO (writer)
- *Top Secret!* - Paramount Pictures (co-writer)
- *The Last Chase* - (co-writer/director)
- *Power Play* a.k.a. *Coup d'Etat* - (writer/director)
- *The Clown Murders* - (writer/director)

Documentaries [edit source]

- *Under Fire: Journalists In Combat* - CBC *documentary channel*, theatrical and television, Distributor: Mercury Media Entertainment, London
- *Islam Vs. Islamists* - PBS
- *The Mohawks and the Mafia* - CBC
- *Battle Diary: A Day in the Life of Charlie Martin* - CBC
- *Cinq Defis* - CBC/TF-1
- *Witnesses: The Untold War in Afghanistan*- PBS/CBC
- *The KGB Connections* - CBC
- *Connections: An Investigation Into Organized Crime* - CBC
- *Idi Amin: My People Love Me* - CBC
- *The Politics of Lying* - CBC
- *The Legend of The Sleepy Grass* (Ireland) - CBC
- *The Week that Paddy Died* (Ireland) - CBC
- *Carnivals* - feature documentary
- *The California Movie* - CBC
- *The Hollywood Ten and Others: A History of Politics in Film* - CBC
- *One Revolution Around the Sun (Peru)* - CBC

[3]

Novels [edit source]

- *Music for Love or War* - Cormorant Books, Canada - Tyrus/Simon and Schuster, United States
- *The Truth About the Night* - Harper Collins Canada
- *The Shelling of Beverly Hills* - AuthorHouse
- *Tiara* - Harper Collins
- *Ivory Joe* - Bantam Books
- *The Commissar's Report* - Houghton Mifflin
- *Laughing War* - Doubleday

[4]

Awards and nominations [edit source]

- International Press Academy Special Achievement Auteur Award - 2015
- Peabody Award - 2012 *Under Fire: Journalists in Combat*
- Academy Award short-list for Best Feature Documentary *Under Fire: Journalists in Combat*
- DGA - Outstanding Directorial Achievement in Movies for Television nomination *Pirates of Silicon Valley*[5]
- Primetime Emmy Award nomination for Outstanding Writing - TV film *Pirates of Silicon Valley*[6]
- Primetime Emmy Award nomination for Outstanding TV film *Pirates of Silicon Valley*[6]
- Edgar Allan Poe Award nomination for Best Television *Sugartime*

Feature or Miniseres

- ACTRA Award for Best Screenplay *Power Play* a.k.a. *Coup d'Etat*
- Genie Award for Best Documentary *Witnesses*
- Gemini Award for Best Documentary *Connections*
- ANIK Award for Best Film *Connections*
- Prix Gemeaux for Best Documentary *Cinq Defis*

References [edit source]

1. ^ The New York Times
2. ^ https://dailynews.mcmaster.ca/articles/spring-convocation-ceremonies-to-present-honorary-degrees-to-ten-distinguished-figures/
3. ^ Library and Archives Canada
4. ^ Amazon book and film page for Martyn Burke
5. ^ "DGA: Winner and Nominee Search" . Directors Guild of America. Retrieved 2015-12-13.
6. ^ a b "Pirates Of Silicon Valley: Emmy Nominations" . Emmy Awards. 1999. Retrieved 2015-12-12.

Sources [edit source]

- [1], November 23, 2011 Globe and Mail article
- [2], McMaster University Alumni
- [3], CBC news radio interview
- [4], 72nd Annual George F. Peabody Awards Announcement
- [5], IMDB Sugartime Award Page
- [6] International Press Academy Award Page

External links [edit source]

- Official website
- Martyn Burke at IMDb
- Book Television Harper Collins Canada interview for *The Truth About the Night* on YouTube
- [7] *Under Fire: Journalists in Combat* website

v · t · e	**Films directed by Martyn Burke** [hide]
	The Clown Murders (1976) · *Power Play* (1978) · *The Last Chase* (1981) · *Pirates of Silicon Valley* (1999) · *Avenging Angelo* (2002)

Authority control

BNE: XX1299288 · BNF: cb120176318 (data) · GND: 1022921002 · ISNI: 0000 0000 8188 0302 · LCCN: n80076733 · NDL: 00434853 · NKC: xx0176970 · NLP: A20748012 · NTA: 252217578 · PLWABN: 9810593078905606 · SUDOC: 028314972 · VIAF: 119039929 · WorldCat Identities: lccn-n80076733

Categories: 1952 births | Living people | Canadian documentary film directors | Canadian film producers | Canadian male novelists | Canadian male non-fiction writers | Canadian male screenwriters | Film directors from Toronto | Journalists from Toronto | McMaster Marauders football players | Players of Canadian football from Ontario | Sportspeople from Toronto | Writers from Hamilton, Ontario | Writers from Toronto | 20th-century Canadian novelists | 21st-century Canadian novelists | 20th-century Canadian male writers | 21st-century Canadian male writers | 20th-century Canadian screenwriters | 21st-century Canadian screenwriters

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